



## Wild Fish Conservancy

N O R T H W E S T  
S C I E N C E   E D U C A T I O N   A D V O C A C Y

August 29, 2007

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter serves as a statement of support for People for Puget Sound's proposal that both Smith Island/Partridge Bank and Protection Island and surrounding marine water be considered by WDNR for designation as new scientific Aquatic Reserves in Puget Sound.

Both sites nominated by People for Puget Sound have been identified as "priority marine sites for conservation" in Puget Sound (Palazzi and Bloch, 2006). The sites are excellent candidates for formal protection under the Aquatic Reserve Program by virtue of their satisfying numerous ecological criteria specified by WDNR (Aquatic Reserve Program Implementation and Designation Guidance, Section 6, 2005): (a) the sites are in relatively pristine states; (b) the sites harbor marine biodiversity; (c) the sites are sufficiently large to encompass food web dynamics at multiple trophic levels; (d) the sites contain rare nesting areas of tufted puffin, a seabird species designated by WDFW as a State Candidate Species of Concern; (e) if designated as Aquatic Reserves, the sites would provide ecological connectivity to the existing Cypress Island Reserve and the San Juan Island National Wildlife Refuge. The proposed sites are valid candidates as scientific Reserves, in particular, since they are the sites of ongoing seabird research with negligible impact on existing natural conditions.

Wild Fish Conservancy fully supports People for Puget Sound's nomination of Smith Island/Partridge Bank and Protection Island/surroundings as scientific Aquatic Reserves.

Sincerely,

Eliot Drucker, PhD  
Director of Science and Research (Physiology)  
Wild Fish Conservancy